

## FOREWORD

As noted in our June issue, the ABAC Journal is in a transitional period, working towards a primary focus on business and economics without losing our previous multiple-field identity, also including research in education and the social sciences. The shift of focus to a single field may have disappointed many potential authors but we gratefully acknowledge their understanding and apologize for any inconvenience this change may have caused.

Along with the shift to a single focus on business and economics, we have made a significant change in our editing team. Please allow me to welcome Dr. Bing Zhu on board as Associate Editor of the ABAC Journal. Dr. Zhu acquired her PhD in Business Administration and Economics, Concentration on Sustainability and Innovation from Katholische University and currently occupies a faculty position at Assumption University's School of Management and Economics. While still young, she has published a number of academic articles in international journals. I am looking forward to working with her in advancing our Journal. On the other hand, with a new focus, we are sad to see our long-term Supervising Editor Mr. San Shwe Baw leave. His valuable contributions and support to the ABAC Journal regarding English instruction and language acquisition will always be kept in our treasured memories.

Looking ahead, please be informed of the upcoming international conference titled "*Sustainability Development, Business Opportunity and Social Responsibility: An Asian Perspective*" at Assumption University scheduled for March 13-15, 2019. It is a special privilege to have three renowned international speakers to lead the conference: Prof. Dr. John Thøgersen from Aarhus University, Denmark; Prof. Dr. Naomi Lamoreaux, Yale University; and last but not least, Prof. Dr. Andre Habisch from Katholische University. These three experts will lead us in discussing key concepts of business sustainability and business opportunity while maintaining social responsibility in the current time, where disruptive economy has become the norm. We can safely say that it is a very challenging time in economic history to start a new business and to keep it alive and thriving in this digital age.

In this issue, beside our regular research articles, we are honored to publish an exclusive article on the centenary of President Nelson Mandela by H.E. GQM Doidge, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa to Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. Like June issue, half of the articles published here are in education or language acquisition that were previously accepted prior to Scopus inclusion and 6 articles in business, plus an article review.

### **1) An Integration of Program Evaluation and Action Research On Preliminary Professional Development Training in a Vocational School**

Professional development is a common practice in schools to enhance staffs' effectiveness, but how effective is it? This study takes a critical look at a professional development training program, evaluating participant satisfaction using in-depth interviews, surveys, and observations. Results and recommendations for improving the quality of the program are analyzed and discussed.

## **2) Developing Intercultural Awareness for Pre-service Teachers in Thailand**

Intercultural awareness, sensitivity and respect for cultural diversity, has been a key expectation for future teachers in this age of globalization. This paper examines intercultural awareness as a learning outcome of intercultural competence (IC) development among pre-service teachers in a teacher education program in Thailand. This action research developed instructional activities over the period of two semesters. Results showed positive findings of intercultural awareness among pre-service teachers.

## **3) International School Management According to the Concept of Developing Students' Global Leadership**

International schools have been a popular choice among affluent families for several decades, in Thailand. Applying a mixed-method approach, this research examined international school management as a mirror of the development of students' global leadership. Samples were obtained from 102 international schools in Thailand. The results were analyzed and discussed according to three aspects: academic management, curriculum development and implementation, and professional development.

## **4) Language and Attitudes of Invisible Minds: An Appraisal Analysis of Cyber Discourse**

This study is an attempt to identify how the discourse employed in the *cyber community* is influenced by different elements in society, to provide some understanding of how blogging can be used as a potential tool for learning and education.

## **5) Students' Perspective: Three Types of Reflective Written Feedback**

Effective writing skills are one desirable objective of EFL. To enhance one's writing ability, different types of feedback have been employed in language writing classes. This paper examined the attitudes of 34 English major sophomores toward three types of feedback—self, peer, and teacher. Findings are discussed.

## **6) The Effectiveness of Blended Learning: A Case Study**

Through a case study method, this paper explores the effectiveness of blended learning to improve the quality of education at college level. Blended learning is defined as supplementary to the traditional classroom, with an online course of identical lecturers and course materials from which students have unlimited access. Findings show positive effects in both student and lecturer satisfaction and exam results.

## **7) Online Impulse Buying Behavior Amongst Undergraduate Students in Tianjin, The People's Republic of China**

As Ecommerce is on the rise globally, this study analyzes the impulse buying behavior of undergraduate students in Tianjin, China on the Taobao.com platform. To understand the impulse buying behavior of online shoppers, the researcher considered variables of website

quality, hedonic shopping value, and product knowledge, to learn how online shop owners can increase their profits by encouraging impulse buying behavior.

#### **8) Strengthening Employee's Engagement in E-Commerce Business Department through an ODI Approach**

Another action research on Ecommerce, this research aims to enhance employee engagement, applying an ODI approach (ODI=Organization Development Intervention) to a start-up firm. Results identified significant changes in “employee efficiency” and “organization performance” between pre-ODI and post-ODI phases. The study contributes to knowledge on employee engagement in relation to the digital industry, which is considered rare and limited.

#### **9) Capital Structure Affecting Firm Value in Thailand**

Using three accounting periods (2012–2014) of financial data from 315 firms listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, this paper examined how performance, growth opportunity, tangible assets, risk, and liquidity affect a firm's capital structure and how capital structure affects firm value. The research discussion helps to fill the gap in both empirical and theoretical knowledge of debt financing's mediating role on firms.

#### **10) Study on the Use of Parking Spaces and Satisfaction of Thai People Using Don Mueang Airport in Bangkok Metropolis, Thailand**

With the rise of low-cost airlines, and continuous growth of passengers, parking space services play a key role on customer experience. This research aimed to study the use of parking spaces in a 7-story car park at Don Mueang International Airport (DMK) and its relation to passengers' satisfaction. Research results showed the average number of parked cars per day; the average parking time per car; and the turnover rate per parking lot per hour as well as the average overall satisfaction level of DMK passengers.

#### **11) Surviving Families after Disaster in Southeast Asia: An Understanding from a Sociological Perspective**

Using the 2004 Tsunami in Southeast Asia as a basis for analysis, this paper attempts to understand the condition of victims of a natural disaster within families from the sociological perspective in three phases — survival, adjustment, and adaptation phases — with the theory of economic sociology applied at each phase.

#### **12) Political Security Obstacles and Challenges of Timor-Leste's ASEAN Membership**

This study analyzes Timor-Leste's foreign policy to increase its participation in international arenas. To enhance its relation with other countries, particularly at the regional level, Timor-Leste is working hard to achieve its full membership in ASEAN. This research focuses on political-security, aiming to find and describe the obstacles and challenges to political security in Timor-Leste. Obstacles already resolved and issues awaiting serious attention are discussed.

### **13) Article Review**

This issue gives an article review on **The B2B Elements of Value** by Eric Almquist, Jamie Cleghorn, and Lori Sherer, L. from the Harvard Business Review: March-April, 2018.

The article addresses key values in business-to-business (B2B) markets with reference to business customers, based on personal and business objectives and subjective supplier selection criteria. In ten pages, it concisely covers the key elements of a value pyramid, research findings, and the methodology for proposing and enhancing accuracy of the value elements.

In closing, I am grateful to Rev. Brother Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, chair of the Board of Advisers, Editorial Board members, and the Editor Team for their continued unfailing support and guidance. My sincere appreciation to all contributors, reviewers and editors.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Absorn Meesing, Ed.D.  
Editor-in-Chief  
ABAC JOURNAL